Homework: *Phases and Agree*

1. Consider example (1) that was discussed in class:

(1) There was assumed to be a reason why a man is in the garden.

If a derivation were based on a single numeration (i.e. no phases!), what would be the surface form of the sentence whose derivation would preempt (1)?

2. In Icelandic *Dative and Nominative with Infinitive constructions* (quirky subject constructions where the argument of infinitivals surfaces with Nominative), agreement between the matrix verb and the nominative argument of the infinitival is optional. In (2) below the matrix verb is either plural agreeing with the argument of the infinitival or it shows 3rd person singular default agreement:

(2)   a. Mér *þóttu/þótti* [*þær* vera duglegar]
          Me(Dat) thought(3pl/dft) they(Nom pl) be industrious
          "I thought they were industrious"
      b. Mér *virtust/virtist [þær* vinna vel]
          Me(Dat) seemed (3pl/dft) they(Nom,pl) work well
          "It seemed to me that they were working well"

In these contexts we find an agreement restriction expressed in (3):

(3)   *Person Restriction on (agreeing) Nominative Objects*
       In the presence of a dative subject, the agreeing nominative object has to
      be 3rd person.

The effects of (3) are illustrated in (4). (4a) contains a 3rd person nominative and the sentence is well formed. (4b) contains a 1st person nominative and the sentence is ill formed:

(4)   a. *Mér* höfðu fundist [*þær* vera gáfaðar]
          Me(Dat) had found they(Nom,pl) be intelligent
          "I had found them intelligent"
      b. **Þeim* höfum alltaf fundist [*við* vinna vel]
          Them(Dat) have always found we(Nom,pl) work well
          "They have always thought that we work well"

The person restriction surfaces only when the matrix verb is marked for agreement (Taraldsen 1995, Sigurðsson 1996, Schütze 1997). Example (5) containing a 1st person

nominative is ungrammatical only when the matrix verb agrees with it, not when it shows default singular agreement:

(5)   Þeim hefur/*höfum alltaf fundist [við vinna vel]
        Them(Dat) has-sg/*have-pl always found we(Nom,pl) work well
        "They have always thought that we work well"

These facts are discussed in Minimalist inquiries (without the actual examples).
        More specifically, the optionality of agreement with quirky subjects illustrated in (2) is treated in Chomsky as follows: *"....Suppose quirky Case is (theta-related) inherent Case with a structural Case feature, as is often suggested in one or another form. Then it too is immobile once it reaches a Case-checking position. If the φ-features of T that check the structural Case of raised quirky subject themselves delete, we have default T; if they remain, we have remote agreement with some lower accessible nominative..."* (Minimalist Inquiries:p. 127-128).
        The restriction on nominative objects in (4), (5) is dealt with as follows: *"In his detailed review of Icelandic agreement, Sigurðsson (1996) concludes that remote NOM allows number agreement but not first/second person agreement. That would follow if the [person] feature o T reduces to [3person] (the default choice) when it attracts quirky Case or EXPL in SPEC,T.."* (p. 128).

-Do you find Chomsky's account of the above Icelandic facts satisfactory? (i.e. consistent with his own assumptions about Agree and checking?). Explain why yes or why no.

-Can you think of an alternative account for these facts, and what would be its consequences for the theory of Agree?

For <u>Quirky subjects,</u> the assumption is that in addition to the inherent case feature, they also have a Structural Case feature that makes them active: *«....Suppose quirky Case is (theta-related) inherent Case with a structural Case feature, as is often suggested in one or another form. Then it too is immobile once it reaches a Case-checking position. If the φ-features of T that check the structural Case of raised quirky subject themselves delete, we have default T; if they remain, we have remote agreement with some lower accessible nominative..."* (Chomsky 1998: 43)

[Note that there is a problem here. The whole thing is presented as if there is a choice. There isn't one though--or there shouldn't be one--since any T that is non-defective

should erase its features immediately if possible. It seems that with respect to "freezing" quirky DPs behave as if they have structural Case--but with respect to "deletion of features of the goal" they do not. Note also the continuation: *"In his detailed review of Icelandic agreement, Sigurðsson (1996) concludes that remote NOM allows number agreement but not first/second person agreement. That would follow if the [person] feature o T reduces to [3person] (the default choice) when it attracts quirky Case or EXPL in SPEC,T.."* But note that these facts suggest that deletion is not a "one fell swoop" operation for quirky subjects and maybe expletives)